

AGENDA
For the Special Meeting of the
Environment & Natural Areas Advisory Committee
To be held in Council Chambers
Saanich Municipal Hall, 770 Vernon Avenue
Wednesday January 20, 2021 - 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Due to COVID-19 measures, Saanich is unable to accommodate the public for any Council, Committee of the Whole, Advisory, Board or Foundation meetings while maintaining the limits on large gatherings due to the Public Health Order.

As per the Order of the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, *Emergency Program Act*, Ministerial Order No. M192, public attendance at the meeting is not required if it cannot be accommodated in accordance with the applicable requirements or recommendations under the *Public Health Act*.

To hear this meeting by telephone, please call 1-833-353-8610, access code 9232581#.

**TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND DIVERSITY,
EQUITY AND INCLUSION STATEMENT**

- 1. INTRODUCTIONS**
- 2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES** (attached)
 - November 25, 2020
- 3. CHAIR'S REMARKS**
- 4. COMMITTEE ADMINISTRATION**
 - Terms of Reference (review/refresher) (attached)
 - Confirm committee meeting dates/times
 - Meeting platforms & protocols
- 5. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION:**
What topics or initiatives are committee members interested in exploring in 2021?
- 6. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY FRAMEWORK**
Discussion of the draft goals and objectives prepared by the Resilient Saanich Technical Committee (attached)
- 7. URBAN FORESTRY STRATEGY: TRACKING AND MONITORING TREES**
Continued deliberation on the motion tabled from the meeting of November 25, 2020:
"That the Environment and Natural Areas Advisory Committee recommend that Council approve resource requests for the 2021 budget for updating the Urban Forestry Strategy and for prioritizing updated information systems and public mapping of tree assets to monitor the status of the urban forest."
- 8. ROUNDTABLE UPDATES**
 - Plastic bag ban update
 - CRD investment in "The Mountain Road Forest":
<https://www.mountainroadforest.ca/>

* Adjournment *

Next Meeting: February 17, 2021

DRAFT MINUTES
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL AREAS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Council Chambers
November 25, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

Present: Chair: Councillor Rebecca Mersereau

Members: Via Teleconference:
Kevin Brown, Jane Cameron, Al-Nashir Charania, George Kilma,
Karthik Narayan, and Ryan Senechal.

Staff: Adriane Pollard, Manager of Environmental Services; and Megan
MacDonald, Committee Clerk.

Guests: Jake Enns, John Roe, UVic Environmental Law Centre: and Frances
Ankenman, UVic Environmental Law Centre.

Regrets: Nicholas Loughton, Carmel Thomson, Angian Wei and Braedan
Drouillard.

MINUTES

MOVED by K. Brown and Seconded by K. Narayan. “That the minutes of the Environment and Natural Areas Advisory Committee meeting held October 21, 2020, be adopted as circulated.”

CARRIED

CHAIR’S REMARKS

The Mayor recently shuffled the Chair for some advisory committees. Councillor Mersereau will continue to be the chair of the Environment and Natural Areas Advisory Committee until further notice. There are no committee meetings in December.

PRESENTATION – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP

Jake Enns presented on ways to engage the public in environmental leadership, the following was noted:

- To be human is to be amazing, we can enjoy the world with all senses. Climate action requires collaboration. Engagement is more than a word. Every viewpoint is essential for longevity and impact in what we do.
- Decisions are made on beliefs and values, not reason. Common ground encompasses all of what is important. Humans need to find common ground to overcome issues together.
- The capacity of reason does not make us reasonable. Evolution did not prioritize logic or reason, evolution prioritized survival and security.
- The goal is to bring everyone together for meaningful climate action. Ways to develop the capacity for meaningful conversations include shared positive experiences, learning together, laughter, sharing of meals, working together and solving conflicts.

- Many are not equipped with communication skills to talk about what is important to them.
- If Saanich was to create a community dome for people to learn in, communicate, and foster a deeper connection, it would be beneficial to the community. The dome could be a hands on learning centre where residents could come together to move ahead with climate action.

In response to questions from the committee, the following was noted:

- The dome could be located in parks or community areas, it could be mobile to move to different areas. It could be an area of refuge that is safe, sustainable and independent.
- The dome would encourage people to come together and move forward to bring positive changes and new ideas.
- The Greater Victoria Place Making Network would likely be receptive to this project, and there may also be grants available through Saanich.
- Climate Change anxiety is becoming an issue for many. It helps to bring awareness of the solutions and positive changes that are being applied such as stream restorations and restoring of ocean habitats.

J. Enns exited the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

PRESENTATION – RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE OPTIMAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ELK/BEAVER LAKE WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN

Frances Ankenman, Articled Student of UVic Environmental Law Centre (ELC) and John Roe, Executive Director of Veins of Life Watershed Society (VOLWS), presented on ways to engage the public in environmental leadership, the following was noted:

- Elk/Beaver Lake water quality has drastically deteriorated in quality, in large part due to a surplus of nutrients washing into the lake from farms and residential properties in the surrounding area. This contributes to regular toxic algae blooms.
- The Capital Regional District (CRD) Parks Committee approved the Elk/Beaver Lake Watershed Management Plan (ELWMP) in September 2020.
- The ELC has prepared a detailed report on behalf of the VOLWS, to put forward a number of recommendations to support the implementation of the draft management plan in a cost effective, priority based manner. The ELC report can be found at: <https://elc.uvic.ca/publications/elk-beaver-watershed-management/>
- The primary recommendations of the ELC report include:
 - Consider Additional Strategies to Reduce Residential Sources of Phosphorus.
 - Consider Additional Strategies to Reduce Agricultural Sources of Phosphorus.
 - Integrate Principles of Community-Based Watershed Management
 - Manage Internal and External Nutrient Sources Together, and Make Source Control a Priority
 - Enhance Cyanobacterial Monitoring and Warning Signage
 - Create Opportunities for Indigenous Co-Management and Co-Governance
 - Increase Level of Detail in Draft Plan Proposed Actions
- The ELC report draws upon diverse sources of expertise, which provides staff across local government and other management plan partners with a valuable source of information and ideas that can be used to guide the implementation of the ELWMP.

In response to questions from members of the committee, the following was noted:

- The ELWMP details moving through each action item and identifies areas of responsibility.
- The ELC report details specific areas where the District of Saanich could become more involved, including promotion of bylaw awareness.
- There was an intergovernmental working group which has talked about what the problems were and how to address the excess nutrients.
- The CRD is currently working on securing funding of an aeration system, and implementing the ELWMP. Saanich has a role in the ELWMP as we have jurisdiction over land use in the watershed, and the ability to engage the public.
- Now that the ELWMP has been endorsed by the CRD, Saanich staff will prepare a report for Council consideration to endorse the plan.
- Saanich has an established First Nations group who may be able to contribute feedback on the ELWMP. It would be beneficial for Saanich and CRD to consult with interested First Nations parties to see how they can take on a greater role in implementing the ELWMP.
- The ELC report recommendation of a community roundtable would be beneficial to create a formal structure to bring stakeholder groups together.

MOVED by G. Kilma and Seconded by R. Senechal. “That the Environment and Natural Areas Advisory Committee recommend that council direct staff to include consideration of the Environmental Law Centre report titled Recommendations for Optimal Implementation of the Elk/Beaver Lake Watershed Management Plan when the Elk/Beaver Lake Watershed Management Plan is considered by Saanich for implementation.”

CARRIED

URBAN FORESTRY STRATEGY: TRACKING & MONITORING TREES

Motion from the meeting of November 25, 2020:

“That the Environment and Natural Areas Advisory Committee recommend that Council approve resource requests for the 2021 budget for updating the Urban Forestry Strategy and for prioritizing updated information systems and public mapping of tree assets to monitor the status of the urban forest.”

Councillor Mersereau advised that there was recently a report to Saanich Council to include resource requests for tracking and monitoring the urban forest. There is still value in the committee recommending support of these items as Council deliberates the 2021 budget. During discussion with the committee, the following was noted:

- Saanich is collaborating with the CRD tree mapping initiative to maximize value in the CRD study and to avoid duplication where possible. Saanich will have additional specific analysis of the canopy cover components with the resource requests from Parks.
- It would be beneficial to fully understand the details of the resource request prior to recommending approval.

MOVED by K. Brown and Seconded by K. Narayan: “That the previous motion be tabled until the January 2021 meeting, when more information on coordination between Saanich Parks and CRD can be provided.

CARRIED

ROUNDTABLE UPDATE

Adriane Pollard, Manager of Environmental Services gave an update on the following items:

- The Resilient Saanich process is gearing up for the public engagement phase. The Resilient Saanich Technical Committee is finalizing high level goals and objectives for the environmental policy framework that staff will facilitate public engagement on.
- The Saanich Environmental Atlas has now been published on GIS. A PDF has been created and is available publicly. New layers include the Coastal Douglas Fir Terrestrial Ecosystem and Saanich Ecosystem Mapping.
- The E-Mobility Strategy was approved at Council recently.

ADJOURNMENT

**MOVED by K. Brown and Seconded by A. Nashir: “That the meeting adjourn at 8:25 p.m.”
CARRIED**

Councillor Mersereau, Chair

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary

Environment and Natural Areas Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The purpose of the Environment and Natural Areas Advisory Committee is to advise Council and recommend policies on urban forestry including significant trees, natural parks, climate change, green technology, energy efficiency and environmental sustainability.

Mandate

The Environment and Natural Areas Advisory Committee will, consistent with the purpose described above, undertake the following:

- Develop and recommend policies to Council and respond to Council requests for advice and information.
- Provide advice to Council on projects, policies or bylaws under consideration by staff or Council, and on additional topics of interest to committee members that fall within the subject area of the committee.
- Review and provide feedback on the Strategic Plan.
- Provide a community perspective on services, programs, events and capital projects related to urban forestry, natural parks (P-4N zone), climate change, green technology, energy efficiency, and environmental sustainability.
- Foster public awareness, recognition and support for a healthy and sustainable natural environment.
- Make recommendations to Council on the designation of significant trees due to their community importance for environmental, heritage or landmark value, or as wildlife habitat.
- Through Council delegation, provide grants to owners of designated significant trees to assist in hazard abatement pruning and to preserve and maintain the health of the tree or preservation of the tree form.

Any initiatives proposed by the committee that has resource implications, including staff time, would have to be approved by Council.

Meetings

The Committee will meet a minimum of four times per year in accordance with its regular schedule of meetings established annually at the first meeting of the year. No meetings are held during the summer and winter breaks (July, August and December). Special meetings may be held at the call of the Chair. The meeting rules and procedures will be in accordance with the Council Procedure Bylaw.

Membership

To the extent possible, Advisory Committees will have a diverse membership with respect to gender, age and cultural-ethnic background.

The committee will consist of eleven (11) members qualified in the discipline relevant to the committee mandate or with a perspective necessary for fulsome consideration of the associated topic, including:

- One member of Council to serve as Chair, appointed by the Mayor; and,
- Ten (10) community representatives appointed by the Council including one youth voting member described as 16-24 years of age.

Members may serve a maximum of seven years on an Advisory Committee, consisting of a one-year term followed by a potential for three, two-year terms. Members who wish to be re-appointed after the completion of a term must re-apply and provide the application and their resume for Council's consideration.

Staff Support

The Planning Department will be the primary contact and together with the Parks Division will provide the required professional support. The Legislative Division will provide secretarial and administrative support.

Review of Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference will be reviewed during the committee's first meeting each term.

Resilient Saanich Environmental Policy Framework

In November 2017, Saanich Council directed that an Environmental Policy Framework be developed to serve as a framework for Saanich environmental policies and programs. Subsequently, a technical committee of natural resource practitioners and specialists was selected and asked to develop goals and objectives for the policy framework. The following is the initial result of that work. It starts with consideration of the Vision for Saanich as provided in the Official Community Plan¹, and then specifies the vision, guiding principles, goals and objectives of an overarching Resilient Saanich Environmental Policy Framework. These are to be reflected in all that happens in Saanich; they are intended to promote the level of meaningful structural change necessary for the District and the communities it supports to become more resilient, inclusive and effective in adapting to climate change, biodiversity loss, pandemics and other environmental challenges that might arise.

Framework Vision:

By 2030, coordinated efforts by all in Saanich/WSÁNEĆ yield measurable improvements in climate change resilience, habitat conservation, watershed health and ecological footprint, benefiting all those who share and inhabit our community.

Framework Guiding Principles²:

1. Recognize the intrinsic value of nature;
2. Respect Indigenous knowledge and land uses;
3. Consider future generations;
4. Ensure evidence-based³ decision making;
5. Adopt the precautionary principle when facing knowledge gaps;
6. Build upon foundational knowledge of historical land use;
7. Lead by example through innovation and best practices;
8. Look beyond our borders to achieve results at a bioregional scale;
9. Address climate adaptation and mitigation in all that we do;
10. Work in partnership with diverse interests to achieve outcomes that realize multiple values and benefits;

Framework Goals⁴:

1. Protect, restore and enhance the ecological function and biological diversity of Saanich.

¹ The vision from the OCP: “Saanich is a model steward working diligently to improve and balance the natural and built environments. Saanich restores and protects air, land, and water quality, the biodiversity of existing natural areas and eco-systems, the network of natural areas and open spaces, and urban forests.”

² Principles are defined as cross-cutting values statements that will guide behaviour and decision-making within the Corporation of the District of Saanich including both elected officials and staff.

³ Supported by as much available and appropriate scientific data, models and research, Indigenous knowledge, historic and cultural documents.

⁴ Goal is defined as the outcome Saanich is looking for.

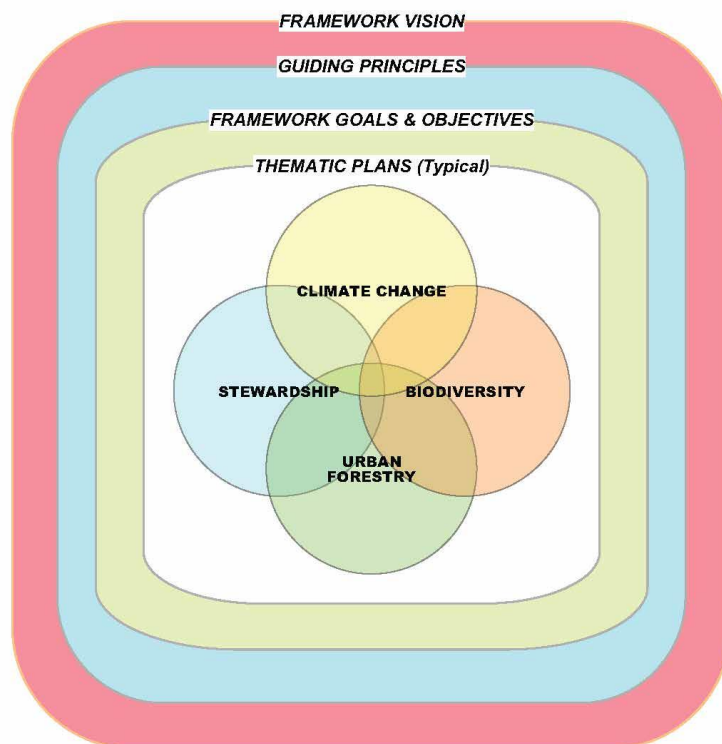
2. Develop and implement complimentary and coordinated policies, strategies, regulations, and incentives grounded in the overarching set of guiding principles to achieve the vision.

Framework Objectives⁵:

1. Fairly and effectively manage⁶ the natural and built environment to adapt to climate change, and enhance biodiversity and other essential ecosystem services;
2. Foster resistance and regenerative capacity (i.e., resilience) in our landscapes against escalating environmental shock and stressors;
3. Engage and support citizens in diverse approaches to active and beneficial stewardship;
4. Update bylaws and policies across all departments to be transparent and consistent with the Environmental Policy Framework.

Thematic Plans

The implementation of Saanich’s environmental policy framework will be outlined and developed in a series of thematic plans—one for each area of environmental focus or concern. These are nested within the overall vision, principles, goals and objectives of the policy framework as illustrated in the following graphic.



⁵ Objectives are defined as the purpose of actions intended to attain a desired goal

⁶ “Manage” encompasses protection, rehabilitation, enhancement, as well as planned development and managed use.

The Venn diagram above shows the various themes intersecting with one another. This intersection is intended to convey the way in which the different thematic areas influence and inform one another. Conservation of tree canopy, for instance, is a policy focus not just for urban forestry, but also for Climate Adaptation (e.g. cooling effect of shade on the urban heat island) and Biodiversity (e.g. species diversity and habitat provision).

Several Thematic Plans already exist, such as Saanich's plans for Climate Action, Urban Forest Management, Active Transportation and Agriculture and Food Security); others remain to be developed. The following is a preliminary list of thematic plans that the Committee is currently considering for the Environmental Policy Framework:

Climate Change

Biodiversity

Urban Forestry (includes soil and green space conservation)

Stewardship

Water Management (includes storm water and watershed health)

Land Use Planning & Development

Marine Shoreline

Saanich's Ecological Footprint

Agriculture (includes sustainable practice & food security)

Green Economy

Transportation (environmental aspects)

Governance and Administration (of environmental policies and service areas)

As indicated in the outline below, nested within each plan are the policies and program objectives that will make up Saanich's response to its diverse environmental challenges and opportunities. For its implementation, each plan also needs to set forth the strategies and tools it will adopt in pursuit of program objectives, along with an action plan.

TYPICAL OUTLINE OF A THEMATIC PLAN

(the outline can vary depending on the thematic plan)

1. Relevant Landscapes and Scales
2. Evaluation of ecosystem health and functional condition
3. Desired future condition
4. Gap analysis and SWOT assessment
5. Policies and program objectives
6. Strategies (approaches)
7. Tools
8. Action Plan (tasks, timelines, lead department, resources)
9. Monitoring and Assessment